



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Mike Flanagan

DATE: April 3, 2007

SUBJECT: **Approval of Revised MEAP and MME Performance Labels**

At the March meeting of the State Board of Education, staff presented ideas for changing the performance level labels used in the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) and the Michigan Merit Examination (MME). These changes were in response to requests from career-technical educators to not use the term "apprentice" for the lowest level of performance on the MEAP or MME assessments.

While the proposed changes received very positive comments from the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability Advisory Committee, the State Board of Education felt that the suggested performance labels, especially for students not passing the MEAP and MME exams, were too punitive. The State Board of Education asked staff to reconsider the performance labels.

Below is a table that shows the old performance level labels, along with two options for how these performance levels could be re-labeled. Option 1 contains the labels that some on the State Board of Education suggested at the March meeting, while Option 2 are performance labels that emerged from staff and others discussion about the topic.

Performance Level	Old Performance Label	Performance Labels Option 1	Performance Labels Option 2
1	Exceeded the Standards	Advanced	Exceeds Expectations
2	Met the Standards	Proficient	Meets Expectations
3	Basic	Needs Improvement	Partially Meets Expectations
4	Apprentice	Needs Intensive Support	Does Not Meet Expectations

The performance labels shown in Option 1 clearly point out that students not passing the tests need substantial assistance. Unfortunately, these labels may imply that students who pass the tests do not need to improve or do not need support as well, when they do. For example, students who score at performance level 2 need help to maintain their proficiency. In addition, the labels in Option 1 are not consistent across the levels, since the labels for performance levels 1 and 2 indicate the level of *performance* for the students who passed the tests, but indicate levels of *support* needed by those students at performance levels 3 and 4 who did not pass the tests.

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608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
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The performance labels shown in Option 2 simply indicate the extent to which students met the expectations that form the basis of the MEAP and MME assessments. They are consistent in doing this. The labels in Option 2 do not indicate the level of support that the students need in order to improve their performance. Statements about students' performance, however, can be found in the performance level descriptions that accompany the reports to parents.

Staff feels that the labels shown in Option 2 consistently and clearly indicate the students' performance relative to the standards assessed in each assessment program. Having a clear idea of students' levels of performance is the first step in helping educators and parents to address students' learning needs. The proposed labels do not have the negative connotations of labels such as "apprentice," nor "below basic."

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the proposed changes to the MEAP and MME performance labels shown in Option 2 and direct staff to use these in reporting assessment results beginning with the 2007-2008 school year.